

R 201719Z AUG 04  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9591  
INFO RWANDA COLLECTIVE  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
CIA WASHDC  
HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH MOLESWORTH UK  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001571

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/20/2010  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: KABILA AUG 20

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROGER MEECE. REASON 1.5(b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary: I met privately with President Kabila on August 20, the day after Kabila's return from the SAC summit and Burundi-related meeting in Dar es Salaam. Kabila reiterated his absolute commitment to the transition process, notably including democratic elections slated for next year. He also observed, however, the necessity for adequate security and other conditions to maintain progress. Referring to last weekend's massacre of refugees in Burundi, I emphasized the importance of all parties avoiding inflammatory rhetoric, and the need for cooperation among domestic leaders and regional governments. In this regard, I noted USG efforts to organize the next tripartite session in Uganda, a subsequent planned visit of USG officials to Kinshasa, and my August 18 phone call to VP Ruberwa, all intended to support dialogue and overcome current tensions. Kabila said he would send a delegation to the tripartite out of respect for the USG, despite a lack of Rwandan cooperation to form a Joint Verification Mechanism, but said that must be the centerpoint of the Kampala meeting. He also welcomed the Kinshasa visit of Washington officials, and my message to Ruberwa. End summary.

¶2. (C) At my request, I had a one-on-one meeting with President Joseph Kabila in his offices in Kinshasa on August 20, the day after his return from the SADC summit in Mauritius, and his subsequent visit to Dar es Salaam to participate in a meetings and a regional summit scheduled to address Burundi issues. This was the first private meeting and opportunity for a substantive exchange since I presented credentials on August 3 .

#### The Transition Process Remains Central

-----

¶3. (C) Kabila began by reiterating his absolute support to the transition process. He noted he had made three solemn promises when he took office; ending the conflict, establishing a national unity government, and holding elections. He said that the country has reached the second stage, the transition, and he is determined to move as planned to the holding of free, fair, and democratic elections next year. He expressed appreciation to the international community and the USG in particular for the support shown to the DRC peace process and the transition. I reaffirmed the importance we attach to the success of the transition and USG continuing support.

#### The Need for Security

-----

¶4. (C) Kabila noted that there are of course conditions needed for the successful holding of elections, notably adequate security conditions. In this regard, he referred to current tensions in the country and region. Picking up on the point, I made specific reference to last weekend's

attack on Congolese refugees in Burundi and reiterated points from the State Department communique issued earlier in the week. I emphasized that the USG is calling for all parties to avoid inflammatory rhetoric to avoid further exacerbating tensions, and that we also wished to reinforce the need for dialogue and cooperation between governments in the Great Lakes region. I offered congratulations for Kabila,s decision to stop in Dar es Salaam, expressing the hope that this provided an opportunity for contact with Burundian and other regional leaders.

15. (C) Kabila summarized general agreements reached in Dar es Salaam, including the labeling of the FNL as a terrorist organization (Comment: All consistent with reporting from Embassy Bujumbura and public statements. End comment). Kabila also said that he had dispatched Army Chief of Staff General Mbuki,a former RCD-Goma general, to Bukavu and the plains of Russisi to track down and take action for any reports of ex-FAR or other Hutu extremist elements in the area. The Burundian President has asked about cross-border cooperation, and Kabila had passed along Gen. Mbuki,s telephone contact numbers to facilitate cross-border military cooperation.

#### Next Tripartite Round

-----

16. (C) In the same vein of regional contact, I noted that we believe it of even greater importance to hold the next round of the tripartite meetings between Uganda, Rwanda, and Congo officials as soon as possible. While we had offered the possibility of Congo as a venue, Ugandan officials had indicated that they could not travel soon to Kinshasa, and we therefore were proposing the dates of August 24 - 25 in Kampala. I also reported that following that meeting, NSC Sr. Africa Director Courville, DAS Yamamoto, and AF/C Director Eastham plan to travel to Kinshasa August 26 for meetings. I also noted AF/C Director Eastham plans to travel to Bujumbura after Kinshasa.

17. (C) Kabila expressed disappointment that Kinshasa would not be the venue for the next round. He quickly went to say, however, that he would send a delegation to Kampala "out of respect" for the U.S. Government, and per his previous meetings with DAS Yamamoto and other officials. He said that were it not for this respect, he would not be inclined to participate given the Rwandan government,s obstructionism to come to any agreement regarding the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM). Kabila noted that there had been an agreement for a JVM accord prior to the next tripartite round, whereas in fact there has been little to no progress. The GDRC is ready to proceed immediately per terms proposed by the U.N., and SRSG Swing has assured Kabila that MONUC can implement its support within 48 hours. The JVM is central to adresssing cross-border tensions and fears, and is critical to resolving problems. For example, there is widespread suspicion that Rwandans were involved in yesterday,s murder of FARDC officers in Goma. If it already existed, the JVM could be used to address the problem, but as of now there is nothing. Kabila said therefore that he will be instructing the GDRC delegation to ensure that the JVM is the item on the agenda, adding that he found it difficult to see how progress could be achieved on anything without some forward movement on the JVM.

18. (C) Kabila said he welcomed the planned visit of the three officials to Kinshasa and looked forward to meeting with them on August 26.

#### The Missing Ruberwa

-----

19. (C) I told Kabila that I had reached Vice President Ruberwa (note: who represents RCD-Goma) by phone Wednesday evening in Goma to convey a message reiterating the importance of the transition process and government for the

future of the Congo, and specifically the interests and security of peoples in eastern Congo. (note: Telcon being reported septel). Kabila said that he had learned of Ruberwa,s continuing absence from Kinshasa following the Burundi refugee attack while he was already en route to the summit in Mauritius. He had phoned Ruberwa with a similar message, accepting Ruberwa's proposal for an international inquiry, privately and publicly condemning the attack, but affirming the importance of Ruberwa,s continuing participation in the transition government. Kabila said he has been unable since to reach Ruberwa, and Ruberwa has apparently made no attempt to contact him. Kabila said he welcomed the message that I had conveyed.

¶10. (C) I also reported that Ruberwa had encouraged me to visit Goma. Kabila rhetorically asked why Ruberwa was trying to get everyone to Goma. I said that Ruberwa ostensibly was seeking to encourage greater personal knowledge of the situation. With much of the RCD leadership gathered in Goma right now, however, I also noted that travel to Goma would inevitably be misinterpreted by many. Kabila concurred, asserting that travel right now to Goma by the US Ambassador would certainly send the wrong message, and would be a "very bad idea."

¶11. (C) Kabila observed that Ruberwa had made "three or four" errors in the past few days that would likely cost. Nonetheless, he is a Vice President of the Republic, it is important for him to return to Kinshasa to make his contribution and play a role in the transition. I said I had told Ruberwa that I hoped he would be in Kinshasa before the planned visit of the three USG officials. Kabila echoed that sentiment, saying that he believed it would be useful for the American visitors to meet with Ruberwa in Kinshasa if possible.

Sen. Kassebaum,s Visit  
-----

¶12. (C) I also reported that Senator Nancy Kassebaum-Baker is planning to travel to the DRC, arriving on August 29. I observed that this would likely cause scheduling problems due to the expected arrival by President Mbeki at around the same time, but expressed the hope that we could work out scheduling. I explained that Sen. Kassebaum-Baker would be traveling not as a USG representative, but as a member of the Blair Commission. Kabila acknowledged the scheduling problem, offered that perhaps Sen. Kassebaum could conduct travel outside of Kinshasa at the beginning of her visit, and hold meetings in Kinshasa later in the week. He indicated that he would be pleased to meet with her following Mbeki,s departure.

Comment  
-----

¶13. (C) Kabila showed his greatest emotion in discussing his perception of Rwandan foot-dragging regarding the Joint Verification Mechanism. This clearly has risen to the top of the Congolese agenda for any discussion with the Rwandans, and it is a safe bet that it will be difficult to get the Congolese to discuss meaningfully other subjects without some forward movement on the JVM. Kabila was also obviously concerned about Ruberwa, critical of some of his actions and statements, but reiterating the importance of Ruberwa,s, and by implication the RCD,s, continuing engagement in the transition process. Kabila appeared frustrated by Ruberwa,s apparent unwillingness to talk, and indeed by the general growing tensions along the Rwandan border and in the east in general. He at least however kept the door open to further talks on all fronts. End comment.

MEECE